

# The Mirror of Erised: A Teaser from *Thine*

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”Albus?”

Albus Dumbledore, the Headmaster of Hogwarts, looked up to see his ward, Harry Potter, sticking his head through the office door. “Harry, my boy! What can I do for you?”

Harry came in and plopped down on one of the overstuffed armchairs in front of Dumbledore’s desk. “I was wondering—is the Mirror of Erised still in the castle?”

Dumbledore set down the parchment he had been reading to stare at the young man in front of him. “Why do you ask, Harry?”

“I got to thinking,” the youth replied, picking up and fiddling with an opened envelope from the desk, “And I was thinking that Voldemort has, several times now, used my own desires against me—Ginny, Sirius, Draco, to name a few. I was thinking that if I’d paid attention to the Mirror the first time, I might have realized that the Department of Mysteries was a trick—that he was playing on my own desires.” He put down the envelope and looked up at Albus. “I know what I think my deepest desires are, of course, but it’s hard to know what it might look like from an outside perspective. I thought the Mirror might have some insight there.”

Thoughtfully, the old man stroked his beard. “It is, indeed, still in the castle,” he answered the earlier question. “I can see your reasoning, and while I may not agree with it. . . .” He looked at Harry over his glasses. “I will agree to take you to it if you agree not to look for it without me present.”

“I can agree to that,” Harry said calmly. “I’m mostly curious to see if I know myself as well as I think I do.”

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Dumbledore unlocked a large wooden door in the dungeons and waved Harry in before following him and closing the door behind them. Harry

stopped a few steps inside the room to look around. Crates, old trunks, and broken classroom furniture lined the walls, but in the center of the room stood a large gilded mirror.

As he walked slowly over to it, he found himself unexpectedly trepidatious. He thought he'd changed since he was eleven, but had he really? Would he look into the mirror to see only his family, as he had the first time?

Stopping just before his reflection appeared in the mirror, he glanced back at the man he thought of as a grandfather. Albus was watching him calmly and stroking his beard rhythmically, but he thought he saw a spark of curiosity in the old man's eyes. When Harry paused, he smiled at the young man, who automatically smiled back.

Heartened, Harry stepped in front of the mirror.

For a long moment, he saw nothing but his reflection, who smiled crookedly at him. Then, just when he was beginning to think the mirror was broken, Voldemort appeared at his feet, eyes wide and staring, quite clearly dead. As if seeing his adversary had been a catalyst, an entire scene faded into being in the mirror: he was standing on the top of the grassy slope overlooking the Hogwarts grounds, Voldemort still lying at his feet. Severus and Albus walked up behind him, each putting a hand on one of his shoulders. His reflection smiled at each in turn, and Severus patted his shoulder and mouthed something—"I'm proud of you," Harry lip-read.

Behind the three of them, his friends and informally-adopted family milled, gesticulating and smiling at him—he caught a glimpse of Hermione jumping up and down, Ron grinning like a loon, Draco arching his eyebrow and smirking. Mrs Weasley and Mr Weasley were hugging near the back. Minerva padded up as a tabby-cat and wove around Harry's ankles. Behind the crowd, he could see the Forest and the edge of the lake, and someone—he thought he caught a glimpse of red hair—was setting off fireworks from a broom, which were exploding and sparkling in the reflection on the lake.

"Oh." He said quietly. "*Oh.*"

"What do you see, my boy?" Albus had come up behind him, and was standing just where the reflection of Severus was standing. The old man put a hand on his shoulder, just as his reflection had.

He smiled up at the man. "I'll tell you, if you'll tell me what you see first." He paused. "Truthfully. You know I can tell, these days."

"Well. Let me look—I haven't looked into this mirror in quite some time now."

They exchanged places, and Harry perched on a nearby overturned desk while his mentor gazed thoughtfully into the mirror. For a long minute both were silent.

“I see you,” the older man said finally, pensively. “You are standing next to me, with Severus next to both of us. Riddle is dead, at your feet, and you are smiling at me.” His voice gave a strange hitch. “Behind us, I can see the faculty, the Order, and the students—they are celebrating; everyone is there.”

Harry came up beside him and gazed at him, astonished. “You see what I see,” he responded quietly, his amazement coloring his voice.

The other man turned sharply to face him, and their eyes met. “Is that so?” His voice was light, but the emotion in his face betrayed it.

They stared into each other’s eyes for a long minute, neither speaking. *The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord...* ran through Harry’s thoughts. It was as if a key had slotted into a lock inside of him and turned, and he saw an answering light appear in Albus’s eyes. “I have the power to make it happen,” Harry said, voice barely above a whisper, and gestured to the mirror. Voice stronger, he repeated, “I have the power to do it.” He felt something take hold inside of him, some fire of purpose he had not known he possessed. “*I will do it.*”

“I believe you, Harry.” Albus told him quietly. “I believe you.”

They looked at each other reflectively for a moment more, each one silently acknowledging that something fundamental had changed.

Suddenly feeling light of heart, Harry’s mouth quirked up, and he said “Of course, I expect I’ll need help with the fireworks. I rather expect I’ll be too busy to see to those myself.”

Albus smiled slowly. “Fireworks?”

“Well, yes.” Harry said as if it was obvious. “It doesn’t seem like a victory celebration without fireworks.” He gestured at the mirror again. “I saw them being set off, over the lake.”

“Ah,” Albus said, eyes twinkling at him. “In mine, everyone was wearing thick wool socks.” He turned back to the mirror for a moment, gazing at it over his glasses. “Including Riddle, it seems.”

Harry threw back his head and laughed. “You barmy old coot,” he said affectionately, and Albus started chuckling. “What is it with you and socks? You’re as bad as Dobby!”

Laughing, the two left the mirror without a backward glance, closing and locking the door behind them.